

Fort Des Moines Historic Complex,
Building 86
(Cavalry Stable)
Des Moines
Polk County
Iowa

HABS No. IA-121-U

HABS
IOWA,
77-DESMO,
24. U-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

HABS
IOWA,
77-DESMO,
24-U-

HABS No. IA-121-U

Building No. 86. Stable

This stable barn likewise followed standardized plan 139 of the Quartermaster General. It stood on Thayer Street and was completed on September 29, 1903, making it the oldest of all the existing stables and one of the earliest structures built at Fort Des Moines. It cost \$15,660.00 to erect and consisted of brick walls raised in running bond on a limestone foundation and topped with a gabled slate roof, along the ridge of which ran a monitor. The monitor contained paired 9-light windows and paired louvered ventilators and had sides covered with slate. The building measured 67 feet wide by 165 feet long and could hold ninety animals. Each end had a double sliding door plus five double hung windows. Each side had a door, two double hung windows located towards the front, and thirteen single sash windows running along its length. (Sometime after 1940 the single sash windows were lengthened into six-over-six-light double hung windows.) All windows had 3-course segmental arches and plain lug sills of limestone.

The interior of the stable encompassed 12,878 square feet of concrete flooring. Presumably, the space was originally divided as follows:

First floor:

4 rooms, 9' 8" x 10' 7"
1 room, 19' 6" x 42'
6 box stalls, 9' 11" x 10'
43 double stalls, 9' 11" x 10'

Attic:

Room, 9' 8" x 19' 6"

The interior consisted of the same type frame construction as Building No. 83 with boxed 8" x 8" columns at the first level. Ductwork

and piping have been installed for a heating system fed by water, and at the southeast corner of the building is a Kewanee Type C heating plant enclosed in a brick room. A toilet was near the southwest corner. There was also much plywood and cinder block partitioning present, along with older fibreboard construction. The loft was removed, although a second level remained in the north end. This area measured approximately 40 feet square and had louvered sides at the northeast and east corners. The area above the hopper windows on the monitor was ceiled with fibreboard.

The building had electricity and no heat. Miscellaneous repairs through June, 1910, averaged \$52.00 per year. In 1911, fire destroyed most of the structure, necessitating its rebuilding. The project was finished in September at a cost of \$12,297.00. Between 1911 and 1939, average annual repairs stood at \$266.27. In December, 1940, each end of the building was reconstructed to accommodate installation of three steel doors (two measuring 11 feet by 12 feet; one measuring 11 feet by 16 feet) during conversion of the stable to a garage for field artillery. In January, 1942, Building No. 86 underwent another conversion, this time into a medical facility for the induction center.

A number of changes have since occurred to the building. On the north end, in addition to the placement of the steel doors, the loft entrance was bricked in. The louvers on the monitor have been covered with a lighter colored slate. On the west side the double door was boarded in and only a single door remains there. Similar alteration took place on the east side where a window was installed. Near the rear door along the east side is a square concrete receptacle measuring 8 feet square perhaps used for holding manure refuse, while at the southeast corner is a large brick chimney to accompany the heating plant. In 1987 Building No. 86 served as a General Services Administration Interagency Motorpool. At that time the structure was in fair condition.(35)

35. Card for Building No. 86. "Historical Record of Buildings." NA, RG 77, Box No. 51; Field survey notes, February 20-22, 1987. QMG Plan No. 139 was not located in the NA, Cartographic Archives Division.